

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Final Office Action dated July 27, 2004 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

In the Office Action, claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,877,830 to Shimada. Claim 1 is also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,513,028 to Sono. Claims 4, 6, 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sono.

Applicants thank the Examiner for noting that claims 2 and 3 contain allowable subject matter, and for allowing claims 7-10 and 17-20.

The rejection of claims 1-4, 6, 11, and 12 is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. Independent claim 1 is allowable over the cited references in that it recites a combination of elements including, for example, “the pixel regions in a peripheral portion of the matrix arrangement have an aperture ratio lower than that of the pixel regions in other portions of the matrix arrangement”. None of the cited references including Shimada and Sono, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention.

The Examiner alleges that Shimada discloses this feature. Applicants respectfully disagree. For example, Shimada discusses “the light-blocking film partially overlaps a periphery of a display area of the first substrate” (Shimada, column 2, lines 39-41). The “periphery of a display area” referred to by Shimada is a dummy area, not a pixel region in which images are displayed. Thus Shimada does not disclose that “the pixel regions in a peripheral portion of the matrix arrangement have an aperture ratio lower than that of the pixel regions in other portions”, because Shimada does not disclose lowering the aperture ration in the pixel region.

By way of further example, Figure 1 of Shimada cited by the Examiner does not show that “the black matrix overlaps the pixel electrodes 11” as the Examiner alleges. Figure 1 of Shimada shows “the black mask 13 is placed so as to partially overlap a portion of the outermost...gate signal line 2” (Shimada, column 6, lines 9-11). Therefore, Shimada does not disclose or suggest “the pixel regions in a peripheral portion of the matrix arrangement have an aperture ratio lower than that of the pixel regions in other portions” as recited in claim 1.

The Examiner also alleges that Sono discloses this feature of the claim. Applicants respectfully disagree. Sono does not disclose or suggest “the pixel regions in a peripheral portion of the matrix arrangement have an aperture ratio lower than that of the pixel regions in other portions”. Sono discloses “three pixel electrodes 4 at the right-hand end constitute dummy pixels. In said dummy pixels, the TFT element (not shown) connected to each pixel electrode is connected to a scanning line and a display line, either of which is however not connected to the driving circuit, whereby said dummy pixels are maintained in electrically insulated state” (Sono, column 4, lines 34-46 and Fig. 5). The shield plate 29 covers the dummy pixels, not pixel regions in which images are to be displayed. Thus, Sono does not disclose, teach or suggest “an aperture ratio lower than that of the pixel regions in other portions” as recited by the claim.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 and claims 2-4 and 6 which depend from claim 1 are allowable over the cited references.

Independent claim 11 is allowable over the cited references in that it recites a combination of elements including, for example, “portions of the black matrix layer corresponding to at least one of a first data line and a last data line among the data lines has a greater width than portions of the black matrix layer corresponding to other data lines”. None of

the cited references including Shimada and Sono, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention.

The Examiner alleges that Sono discloses this feature of the claim. Applicants respectfully disagree. Sono does not disclose or suggest “portions of the black matrix layer corresponding to at least one of a first data line and a last data line among the data lines has a greater width than portions of the black matrix layer corresponding to other data lines”. Sono discusses “the shape of the step, to be formed adjacent to the pixel area, may be made same as, substantially same as or similar to that of said pixel area by a dummy area”. (Sono, column 7, lines 38-50). Sono does not discuss the width of the shield 29. In any case, the shield plate 29 covers the dummy pixels, not pixel regions in which images are to be displayed. Therefore, Sono does not disclose, teach, or suggest “portions of the black matrix layer corresponding to at least one of a first data line and a last data line among the data lines has a greater width than portions of the black matrix layer corresponding to other data lines”.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 11 and claim 12 which depends from claim 11 are allowable over the cited references.

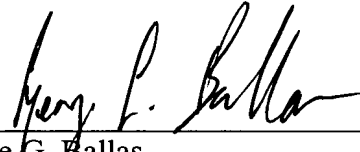
Applicants believe the foregoing arguments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Dated: October 27, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

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